(c) and (d) Efforts have been made for improvement of various activities of the scheme. As far as agricultural equipments are concerned the Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering, Bhopal is mainly engaged in development of prototype of agricultural tools and implements some of which are sold to the farmers. During 2007-08 tools and implements worth Rs.93.52 lakh were sold against Rs.41.94 lakh during 2006-07. As far as sale of seeds and nursery plants are concerned the availability of seeds through ATICs has increased from 2.70 lakh quintal during 2006-07 to 4.10 lakh quintal during 2007-08. The availability of planting material has increased in 18 ATICs. The ATICs do not have facility for testing of seed. Overall the number of farmers availing various advisory services increased from 3.50 lakh during 2006-07 to 4.07 lakh during 2007-08.

Compensation for agricultural crop

1272.SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state whether Government has any plan to consider one village as one unit for the purpose of paying compensation for agriculture crop?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) which is in operation since rabi 1999-2000, is an 'area' based scheme. As per provisions in the scheme, the implementing States/UTs can notify any unit area of insurance including village for the implementation of the scheme. However, the States/UTs will have to undertake requisite number of Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs) for making assessment of the yield at village level.

Opening of chemist shops by Government

†1273. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to open a chemist shop in every district in the country where 350 essential medicines would be sold;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of those 350 essential medicines that would be made available in these shops and how much less their prices would be as compared to medicines sold in open market; and

(d) by when these shops would start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) Government has decided to open "jan aushadhi" generic drug stores in the country depending upon the financial assistance and other support offered by respective State Governments. The first District Generic Store in the name of "jan aushadhi" has been opened at Civil Hospital, Amritsar (Punjab) on 25-11-08. The list of medicines is finalized in consultation with State Governments. A Comparative list of some of the medicines indicating average market price and "jan aushadhi" price is given in the Statement.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

Statement

Comparative list of prices of medicine

Sr. No.	Name of Medicine	Pack	Average market price	Jan Aushadhi price
1.	TAB. CIPROFLOXACIN 250mg	10	55.00	10.40
2.	TAB. CIPROFLOXACIN 500mg	10	97.00	20.10
3.	TAB. DICLOFENAC 100mg SUSTAINED RELEASE	10	36.70	3.10
4.	TAB. CETIRAZINE 10mg	10	27.00	2.50
5.	TAB. PARACETAMOL 500mg	10	11.00	2.30
6.	TAB. NUMESUILIDE 100mg	10	32.00	2.50
7.	CAP. CEPHALIXIN 500mg	10	155.00	29.40

Drug prices

1274.SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether drug price regulator National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority recently said that it presumed the prevailing prices of medicines in the country are unreasonable, in a note distributed at a seminar last year;

(b) if so, the steps Government is considering to take to reduce drug prices so that these drugs are available at cheaper rates to people for healthcare;

(c) whether drug price regulator took decision to immediately pass on benefit of excise duty cuts announced in budget to customers; and

(d) if so, to what extent drug industry has been able to pass on the benefits?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) In the last seminar organized by NPPA, a number of issues were discussed including the prevailing pharma regulatory practices in the world. In general, NPPA brought to the notice of the participants of the seminar that on the basis of a study by National Commission on Macro Economy and Health that drug retail margins were very high in the pharmaceutical market.

(b) In order to reduce the drug prices so that these drugs are available at cheaper rates to people for healthcare, Government has revised the allowable price increase limit in case of non scheduled formulations from earlier 20% increase per annum to 10% increase per annum *w.e.f.* 1.4.2007. In addition the Govt. has delegated its power under paragraph 10 of DPCO, 1995 to National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA) on 15.01.07 in pursuance of paragraph 26 of DPCO, 1995. Accordingly, the NPPA can cause enquiry, call for information and fix retails price of a